



Garth Limburg, intern Wasatch County planner, holds street sign.

Wasatch OKs system for designating streets

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By Kris Radish

Deseret News correspondent

HEBER CITY — Soon, anyone who gets lost in Wasatch County will know exactly where he is.

The County Commission has approved a new street numbering system that will go into effect as soon as the street signs are completed.

Like the majority of counties in the state, Wasatch is now using the route system. That doesn't pinpoint a house, or street — in fact, the postmaster is the only person who knows where each route and box number is.

That's why things are changing in Wasatch County. No one can find anything.

In January, the postmaster, Glade Jorgensen, wrote a letter to the Wasatch County Commission asking that a street plan be adopted. He said he couldn't handle assigning numbers plus his regular post office duties in fast-growing Wasatch County.

The County Commission thought it was a good idea and passed an ordinance that established a street numbering and naming system.

County Planner Bob Mathis handled everything from there. He let his summer intern, Garth Limburg do most of the work on the project under his supervision.

"It really was time for the county to move into this system," Mathis said. "We were starting to have some real problems."

He described some of the problems. One night when Mathis was working the emergency switchboard in the sheriff's office, he received a call on an attempted suicide.

"I knew where the house was, but the deputy didn't, and because there were no addresses, I couldn't explain to the deputy how to get to that house."

A call to the postmaster solved the problem. He explained in detail how to get to the house, the same way one of his carriers delivers mail.

"It took the poor deputy 15 minutes to get there because he ended up going back and fourth like he was a mail carrier," Mathis said. "We saved the woman, but a street address sure would have helped."

Until now, giving directions in Wasatch County has been a matter of "Go to the city. Turn left by Swensens." "Go to the old Giles' place. The house burned down and stand a right by the dead oak."

accordingly after that," Mathis explained.

That means that someone on 12th East is 12 blocks east of Main. It is easier, the planners think, than turning left by the house with the blue curtains.

One problem the Wasatch planners had to deal with was the Provo River. It cuts a dividing line through the county and has been used as a point of direction since the pioneers settled the area.

"What we had to do was use the street system already established in Midway for that side of the river and the system already established in Heber for that side," Limburg said. "That will make it difficult, because there will be a 1200 East in each area, but I think once people get used to it everything will be fine."

When the new system takes effect, it will be possible to give every piece of land in Wasatch County an address. About 90 intersection signs will be installed.



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"It took the poor deputy 15 minutes to get there because he ended up going back and forth like he was a mail carrier," Mathis said. "We saved the woman, but a street address sure would have helped."

Until now, giving directions in Wasatch County has been a matter of familiarity. "Turn left by Swensens." "Go up to where the old Giles' place burned down and hand a right by the dead oak." "Take Center Creek road by Bob's pasture and it's the first place on the left."

It took a month for Mathis and Limburg to do it, but they laid out the new system. Now they are waiting for the signs to be delivered.

"We are leaving all the old street signs and names the same," Garth explained. "There's no reason to change Tate Lane or any of these other roads that have been named for years. Besides, everyone who has lived here all their lives wouldn't like it."

Limburg had the job of figuring out which streets would have what numbers. He used the same system Salt Lake City has, the Lyman Coordinate System.

"Center Street and Main Street become the starting points and the streets are numbered

accordingly after that," Mathis explained.

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